

**CROSSING GUARD PROGRAM**

**Recommendation**

The Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services and City Solicitor recommends:

That Council provide direction with respect to the Crossing Guard program.

**Economic Impact**

The economic impact will be dependent upon the direction provided by Council.

**Communications Plan**

A communication plan specific to the direction provided by Council will be developed and communicated with the school boards, the Crossing Guards, and other affected individuals.

**Purpose**

To provide a report as directed by Council at its meeting of April 2, 2007 with regard to the replacement of Crossing Guards due to absences.

**Background - Analysis and Options**

On June 28, 2004, through the budget process, Council approved the elimination of 27 Crossing Guards throughout the City of Vaughan and decreased the pay by \$0.75 per hour (Item 29, Report No. 55). In addition, in order to meet budgetary constraints, a decision was made by staff to eliminate payment for Professional Activity/Development days, as well as eliminate payment for the three hours minimum per day.

Crossing Guards were advised of the changes during the summer and as a result, approximately thirteen (13) Crossing Guards that had a good work record and had worked for the City of Vaughan for several years, resigned. Since the changes were implemented, some of the Crossing Guards that have continued to work for the City of Vaughan have indicated that they feel unappreciated.

These changes were highly publicized in local newspapers and news stations. Since then, the Crossing Guard Program has been under great scrutiny by parents and schools. Prior to the 2004 – 2005 school year, Public Works and Parks staff provided support and acted as replacements for absent School Crossing Guards. After the changes in 2004, these staff were no longer called upon as backup due to budgetary restrictions. Staff receive complaints whenever a crosswalk is left unattended due to illness or other absences. Comments we have received from the public indicate that public perception is that the City of Vaughan does not care about the most vulnerable members of its community, its children.

It has been increasingly difficult to attract standby Crossing Guards as we do not offer mileage reimbursement. From September 1993 to June 1996, School Crossing Guards who resided more than one kilometre from the school location at which they worked and who traveled by bus or by car, were paid \$2.50 per day as travel allowance. Many have indicated that they would travel to locations further from their home if they were compensated for mileage.

The School Crossing Guard per hour rate of pay has always been directed by Council. Over the years, the per hour rate of pay has changed on a number of occasions. The chart below summarizes the historical per hour pay rates:

School Year	Per Hour Rate of Pay
1986/87	\$409.50 per month
1987/88	\$409.50 per month
1988/89	\$8.00 per hour
1989/90	\$12.00 per hour
1990/91	\$12.00 per hour
1991/92	\$12.00 per hour
1992/93	\$12.00 per hour
1993/94	\$10.00 per hour + \$2.50 per day travel allowance
1994/95	\$10.00 per hour + \$2.50 per day travel allowance
1995/96	\$10.00 per hour + \$2.50 per day travel allowance
1996/97	\$11.00 per hour
1997/98	\$11.00 per hour
1998/99	\$11.00 per hour
1999/2000	\$11.00 per hour
2000/01	\$11.00 per hour
2001/02	\$11.00 per hour
2002/03	\$11.00 per hour
2003/04	\$12.00 per hour
2004/05	\$11.00 per hour start rate, \$11.25 for returning guards P.A. Days no longer paid as per previous practice
2005/06	\$11.00 per hour start rate, \$11.25 for returning guards
2006/07	\$11.00 per hour start rate, \$11.25 for returning guards

Since September 2006, ongoing attempts have been made to attract individuals through advertising in the local newspaper, City of Vaughan website, job boards in the Human Resources Department, Community Centres and Vaughan Public Libraries, HRDC, COSTI Immigrant Services, flyers sent home with children with School Board approval, Senior's Fairs, and community boards. We have asked for the assistance of other Crossing Guards and City of Vaughan staff to refer anyone they feel may be interested in the position to contact us. In fact, Councillors have sent out information to constituents asking for interested persons to forward their resume to the Human Resources Department. When complaints are received by residents, they are asked if they are interested in working as a crossing guard or if they know of anyone that might be interested in this position. These efforts have not provided sufficient numbers of Crossing Guards. There are certain areas, Thornhill in particular, that remain difficult to attract permanent and/or standby Crossing Guards.

This shortage of permanent guards is not exclusive to the City of Vaughan. City TV News reported "*Crossing Guard Shortage Prompts Police Plea*", Thursday, April 26, 2007 indicating seven locations that do not have a permanent crossing guard. Toronto Police runs the Crossing Guard program and as such is able to utilize the services of police officers as standby Crossing Guards. Crossing Guards working for Toronto Police are paid \$10.36 per hour and receive a twelve percent traveling allowance which is equivalent to \$11.60/hour.

Attached is Appendix A, a Crossing Guard Municipal Comparison. Most other municipalities have the advantage of using staff in other departments (Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Operations) to ensure appropriate coverage. It is our understanding that the City of Vaughan has not used Public Works or Parks Department for two years because of work load, shift times, cost, etc.

Markham and Aurora use a staffing agency to run their Crossing Guard Program. We received a quote from the firm that runs the whole program for assistance in the recruitment of Crossing Guards. The quote is to provide the supply of Crossing Guards which includes the recruitment, training, supervision and payment by Staffing Services of the employee for various stations: \$21.75/hr which includes all mandatory government remittances.

#### **Options and Implications:**

1. Utilize Staffing Agency: The cost of outsourcing would be approximately \$1,498,140 cost/year, or double the current cost. The agency would be responsible for filling all spots, provide all training, supervision and payroll. However, citizens still see it as a City program and we would not be responsible for being the intermediary between parents/schools and the agency.
2. Review Compensation Package and adjust at least to what Crossing Guards had prior to the changes in 2004:

Options for adjustments include any or all of the following:

- i) Increase hourly rate to \$12/hr: \$615 per guard or \$51,660 annually for 84 guards
  - ii) Provide mileage reimbursement: \$4.00/day: \$820 per guard or \$69,000 annually
  - iii) Pay for P.A. Days at current rate of \$11.25: \$56.25 per guard or \$4,725 annually
  - iv) Provide a minimum of 3 hours pay per day: \$98.44 per day or ≈ \$17,227 annually
3. Utilize Parks and Public Works labourers for emergency standby coverage at an additional cost of approximately \$30,000, however, in order to ensure we had adequate staff in Public Works and Parks to complete their work, additional staff may have to be hired increasing the cost beyond the \$30,000. Each additional labourer has an additional cost of approximately \$50,000 annually.
  4. Continue the program as it exists today. There would be no increase in cost; however, we would continue at times to see unattended crosswalks when absences occur.

#### **Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007**

The current Crossing Guard program impacts our ability to "Improve community safety through design, prevention, enforcement, and education", improve staff morale or "attract, retain and promote effective staff".

#### **Regional Implications**

None

## **Conclusion**

Despite ongoing efforts at attracting and retaining Crossing Guards, at times we are left with unattended crosswalks. Citizens have told us how important it is to have Crossing Guards at all locations each and every day. Crossing Guards have told us that the hourly rate, the removal of pay for P.A. days and the lack of mileage reimbursement is impacting our ability to attract and retain Crossing Guards. Overall, our compensation package offers less than that of other municipalities. The lack of emergency backup coverage leaves us with crosswalks unattended. Lack of compensation such as mileage remuneration, pay for PA Days, hourly rate, and pay for a minimum number of hours makes it difficult to attract new employees.

## **Attachments**

Crossing Guard Municipal Comparison

### **Report prepared by:**

Janet Ashfield, Director of Human Resources

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Atwood-Petkovski  
Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services and City Solicitor

	Vaughan	Brampton	East Gwillimbury	King Township	Mississauga	Newmarket
<b>Methods of Advertising Used</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- local paper</li> <li>- City website</li> <li>- job boards at HR &amp; Community Centres</li> <li>- send flyers home with children (when schools allow)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- website</li> <li>- workopolis</li> <li>- local newspaper (not often)</li> <li>- flyers in school mailbox</li> <li>- ad in school newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- local paper</li> <li>- City website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- City website</li> <li>- local paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- haven't advertised in approx. 10 years</li> <li>- word of mouth</li> <li>- posters up in schools (sometimes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NOT in local paper</li> <li>- mostly word of mouth (guard leaving recommends a replacement)</li> <li>- flyers in school mailboxes &amp; senior centres</li> <li>- City website</li> </ul>
<b>(Typical) Turnover Rate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- avg 5-8 guards leave per season (due to illness, extended vacation, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- depends on economy</li> <li>- finds turnover is worse just after winter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- very low</li> <li>- 3 full time guards employed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- extremely low turnover rate</li> <li>- currently employ 6 guards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- with retiring guards and new crosswalks usually hire 30-35 new guards/year</li> <li>- 200 crossing guards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- very low turnover</li> <li>- has had years with no one leaving</li> <li>- 27 crosswalks</li> </ul>
<b>(Typical) Vacancy Rate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 51 crosswalks were left unattended at least once b/w Sept. and March</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- crosswalks are never unattended</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- never have an unattended crosswalk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no crosswalks are unattended</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no crosswalks are unattended</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- very low vacancy</li> <li>- no crosswalks unattended</li> </ul>
<b>Coverage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- b/w 2 and 4 standby guards per area</li> <li>- some do not travel to crosswalks they cannot walk/bike to</li> <li>- some will only cover certain crosswalks for other various reasons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 8 - 12 spare guards (must be on call for all shifts)</li> <li>- will allow 1 guard to cover 2 shifts if necessary</li> <li>- will send office staff (3 ppl in dept. who only deal with C/G) out as a last resort</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- one stand-by guard</li> <li>- have "borrowed" guards from other towns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- absences are covered by staff in Parks &amp; Recreation Department</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 16 stand-by guards</li> <li>- 2 assistants (only job is to train/monitor guards) who will fill-in if necessary (very rare)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- one stand-by guard</li> <li>- can use Public Works employees to fill-in when needed</li> </ul>
<b>Compensation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- \$12.92/hr</li> <li>- paid for school PA Days</li> <li>- paid minimum 3 hrs/day (spares paid min. 3.5 hrs/day) regardless</li> <li>- 4% vacation pay</li> <li>- \$50/yr clothing allowance</li> <li>- yearly social event (with long-service and attendance certificates awarded)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- \$12.92/hr</li> <li>- paid for school PA Days</li> <li>- 3.5 hrs/day regardless</li> <li>- 4% vacation pay</li> <li>- \$50/yr clothing allowance</li> <li>- yearly social event (with long-service and attendance certificates awarded)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- \$12/hour</li> <li>- paid for school holidays</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- pay \$52 / day</li> <li>- paid for school holidays (except Spring Break and Christmas Break)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- \$11.96 (start) - \$12.49 (after 6 months)</li> <li>- 4 step travel allowance (\$35-140/month)</li> <li>- clothing allowance</li> <li>- paid for PA Days &amp; Christmas Break (not March Break)</li> <li>- stand-by's paid everyday regardless &amp; get \$140/month travel allowance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- \$11.92 - \$13.24/hour</li> <li>- paid for full hour</li> <li>- paid for school holidays</li> </ul>
<b>Hours of Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 shifts/day</li> <li>- hours dependant on crosswalk (b/w 2.75 - 4 hr/day)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 shifts/day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 shifts/day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 shifts/day, expected to work 1 hour/shift</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 shifts/day</li> <li>- all guards paid for 3.5 hours/day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 or 3 shifts/day</li> <li>- have out most crosswalks to 2 shifts</li> <li>- 3 shift crosswalks are ones near/cross school</li> </ul>

	Oakville	Richmond Hill	Toronto (32 Division)	Whitby	Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville	York Region
<b>Methods of Advertising Used</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parks &amp; Recreation Guide</li> <li>- School newsletters (if need to target a certain area)</li> <li>- NOT in local paper (too expensive)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- post flyers at school</li> <li>- school newspapers</li> <li>- City website</li> <li>- local paper</li> <li>- community centres</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- local paper</li> <li>- CityTV on-air spot (Breakfast Television)</li> <li>- mostly word-of-mouth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- local paper</li> <li>- school boards and school newsletters (found to be most effective)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- local Town paper</li> </ul>	
<b>Turnover Rate (Typical)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- usually have 1-2 guards leave throughout the year</li> <li>- 1-2 guards leave at end of the year</li> <li>- often due to age, illness, etc.</li> <li>- 103 Guards (10 spares)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low turnover rate</li> <li>- currently have 32 crosswalks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low turnover rate</li> <li>- 32 Division has 40 guards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lose approx. 8-10 guards to illness, retirement or other</li> <li>- currently employ 70 guards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low turnover rate</li> <li>- only had 2 guards leave in past 7 years</li> </ul>	
<b>Vacancy Rate (Typical)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- usually no crosswalk unattended but sometimes happens in winter months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- usually don't have a problem with coverage</li> <li>- ppl don't leave for more than 2-3 weeks at a time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low absenteeism</li> <li>- no crosswalks unattended</li> <li>- allow ppl to take months off (position not guaranteed upon return)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no crosswalks are unattended</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no crosswalks unattended</li> </ul>	
<b>Coverage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- usually no crosswalk unattended</li> <li>- will pull guards from controlled stops to cover if need be</li> <li>- have 2 coordinators to cover if necessary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- stand-by crossing guards (usually not enough to cover absences)</li> <li>- will allow one guard to work two crosswalks</li> <li>- can pull employee from Operations Department to cover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 "spare" crossing guards</li> <li>- can send a police officer to crosswalk if required (only had to do this 1-2 times this year)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- have 7 "casual or rover" guards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- use stand-by guards</li> <li>- can use Public Works staff when required (staff get regular pay &amp; reg. shifts end same time as crossing guard shifts so no overtime concerns)</li> </ul>	No Crossing Guards
<b>Compensation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- \$10.84 (start) - \$12.04</li> <li>- mileage reimbursement at standard gov't rate (\$0.50/KM)</li> <li>- Minimum 1hr pay/shift</li> <li>- \$10/month clothing allowance</li> <li>- All Guards paid for P.A. Days (2 hrs)</li> <li>- Perfect Attendance = \$10 C/G at Tim Hortons</li> <li>- Miss one day = \$5 C/G at Tim Hortons</li> <li>- 2 appreciation social events (in winter and spring)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- \$11.50/hour (first year)</li> <li>- \$12.25/hour (second year)</li> <li>- \$4.00/day mileage reimbursement</li> <li>- paid for all school holidays (except March Break)</li> <li>- Attendance Bonus (\$80 Sept - Dec &amp; \$90 Jan - June)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- \$10.35/hour</li> <li>- 12% travelling allowance</li> <li>- 4% vacation pay</li> <li>- annual Christmas Party</li> <li>- 3 "East Crossing Guard" plaques awarded each year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- \$13.77/hour</li> <li>- are paid for school holidays (including March Break and Christmas Break) in lieu of 4% vacation pay</li> <li>- entitled to one week off/year (which few take)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- \$15.59/hour</li> <li>- paid for P.A. Days (if work day before and after P.A. Day)</li> </ul>	
<b>Hours of Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 - 4 hr shifts/day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 or 3 shifts/day</li> <li>- starting to phase-out lunch shifts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hours dependant on the crosswalk</li> <li>- some crosswalks have 2 shifts; others have 3 shifts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4 shifts or 2.5 hours/day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 shifts/day</li> </ul>	